175 the Bedouins of the Hijaz area. This Sanusi success aroused
795 the jealousy and animosities of the orthodox 'ulama ("clergy")
[798] of the Mecca area. Al-Sanusi was forced to flee the Arabian
[793] peninsula, and in 1843 he founded his first zawiya ("lodge"),
[346] al-zawiya al-baida, in Cyrenaica. The Sanusi doctrine was as
acceptable to the Bedouins of Cyrenaica as it had been to the
[793] tribes of the Hijaz. The person and teachings of al-Sanusi
al-kabir ("the grand Sanusi"), as he came to be known, fit
into the "holy man" religious tradition of Cyrenaica and even
spread beyond into the Sudan and Lake Chad area. The Order
[793] showed primary concern for the people of the desert: the
[346] Sanusi shaikh ("holy man") cared for the poor, and the zawiya
485 became rest stops, storehouses, and religious centers where
[794] Bedouin children were taught their Quranic lessons. Through
175 the zawiya, the Sanusiyya became a political and economic
795 integrating factor in the desert, and al-Sanusi became the
346 legitimate authority of the Bedouins. The zawiya became a
182 very important part of the traditional desert economic system.
[793] Today one zawiya remains near al-Qasr but it is scarcely used.
The Bedouins say: "Before, when Alexandria was far away by
camel, we could get what we wanted at the zawiya. Now that we
have trucks and trains no one goes to the zawiya."

175 The fortunes of the Bedouin became linked with those
795 of the Order. When the Sanusi became involved in full-scale
648 conflict with the Italian colonial power, the Bedouins bore

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

poured its vitality southwards along the trade routes to the interior of Africa, into Fazzan and the various regions that are to-day called the French Sahara and French Equatorial Africa. Until France opened up the Atlantic seaboard, much of the Central African trade found its way along the oases-routes to the ports of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and there were, therefore, well-established social connexions running from the Bedouin tribes of Cyrenaica and southern Tripolitania through the oases-dwellers to the tribes of the interior, for the nomads of Libya controlled the routes and to a large extent supplied the transport for the caravans. These connexions allowed an easy ingress to the Sanusiya. The two Cyrenaican tribes who chiefly traded with the Sahara, the Majabra and the Zuwaya of the oases of Jalu and al-Jikharra, had already been won over to the Order. The Zuwaya, who had date groves in the distant oasis archipelago of Kufra, over 700 km. to the south of Jaghbub, had already promised the Grand Sanusi a liberal donation of palms and water if he would build a zawiya there, and he had sent one of his followers to supervise the erection at al-Jauf of a lodge which became known as Zawiyat al-Ustad. Also, the Order had gained a foothold in the Wadai. While still a student at Mecca the Grand Sanusi had made friends with Muhammad Sharif, a prince of the Wadai, who in 1838 became Sultan of that country and furthered the interests of the Order there. It is said also that the Grand Sanusi bought a caravan of slaves on its way from the Wadai through Jaghbub to the coast and, having freed and educated them, sent them back to the Wadai as his missionaries.[1] The Order was also infiltrating from Mizda in southern Tripolitania, where a lodge was founded in 1845, and from the lodges in the oases of the Sirtican hinterland into Fazzan.

In Jaghbub oasis the Grand Sanusi set about the construction of his headquarters, a large mass of stone buildings, some of them two-storied, enclosing a mosque and school which were, for Cyrenaica, on an imposing scale. Around these central buildings and courts were the houses of the *Ikhwan*, many of them teachers in the school, of the students, of whom Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman says that there were over 300,[2] and of the Sayyid's family. There were also guest-rooms, quarters for the

[1] Duveyrier, op. cit., pp. 18–19.

[2] Op. cit., p. 88.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

slaves, kitchens, and wells. The oasis depression was studded with date palms and just outside the main entrance to the village were small irrigated gardens and wind-mills. The people had to use the brackish water for ordinary purposes, but sufficient fresh water for tea was obtained from infrequent showers by hollowing out cisterns in the rocks at the top of the western escarpment of the oasis.

The Grand Sanusi was not only a very learned man and a writer of distinction but also a bibliophile with a fine library of some 8,000 volumes,[1] mostly works on Islamic law and jurisprudence, mysticism, philosophy, history, koranic exegesis, poetry, and astronomy and astrology. Round him were many men capable of making good use of this substantial library. Indeed, it would have been difficult to have found anywhere in the Islamic world at that time, outside Cairo, a circle of better scholars. Poetry was one of the arts most cultivated at the oasis and I have been told by Arabs that it reached a high level of excellence. Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman, himself a poet, wrote that at Jaghbub one meets 'literary men of distinction, whose writings eclipse those of the poets of Iraq and of Andalousia'.[2]

The whole community at Jaghbub may have numbered round about 1,000, but it is not possible to make more than a guess at the figure. As the oasis produces little except dates, the supply problem must have been considerable, and we know that the Grand Sanusi kept herds of camels to the west of the oasis, where there is scrub grazing, and at al-'Azziyyat, to transport supplies from the coast. The community lived very largely on the surplus revenues, mostly goods in kind, sent annually by all the zawiyas of Cyrenaica.

The community was centred round the University. It was, in fact, almost purely a University society, and its importance as such in the history of the Sanusiya Order is very considerable. Here, under his personal supervision and the supervision of his disciples, far from worldly distractions, the Grand Sanusi was able to train the future leaders of the Order. The Shaikhs of the lodges of the Order were appointed by him from among his intimate circle of disciples, many of whom had followed him

[1] Duveyrier, op. cit., p. 24; Muhammad bin 'Uthman, op. cit., p. 88; Sir Richard Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Meccah* (Memorial Edition), 1893, vol. ii, pp. 24–5.

[2] Op. cit., p. 88.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

is not to be built till the zawiya is completed. There will be builders and carpenters among the Brothers and all that is required of the tribal Shaikhs is selection of the site and supervision of the work. He points out to them that the work is for their benefit, in that they and their sons will receive in the zawiya an education, especially in the Koran and in the laws of Islam, and will be able to worship there. The Grand Sanusi then cites passages from the Koran and the *Hadith* commending religious benefactions. Finally he prays God to assist those engaged in the building and those who have made themselves responsible for the upkeep of the zawiya. God helps those who help others. A man reaps what he sows.

Some of the Cyrenaican lodges were larger than others but they all had the same features, a straggling warren of stone buildings comprising a mosque, schoolrooms, guest-rooms, apartments for the Shaikh of the zawiya and his family, rooms for teachers and pupils, and houses for the Brothers, clients, and servants, and their families. Many had small gardens nearby and the local cemetery was usually adjacent to a lodge. Jaghbub, where several hundred persons lived, was the largest of such communities. The ruins of Dariyana and al-'Azziyyat are also extensive and must have housed several hundred persons, but the average lodge probably housed only some fifty to a hundred persons, including wives and children, though there were often *Marabtin* families attached to the zawiya living nearby, sometimes in caves dating from classical times. The importance of a lodge was not to be estimated so much by the number of its occupants as by its tribal position and the number of its Bedouin adherents.

The Shaikh of a new zawiya would point out to the local tribesmen that he and his companions had no means of supporting themselves or of maintaining the zawiya. The various sections nearby then gave to the lodge the lands adjoining it, this estate surrounding a lodge being known as its *haram*. On the plateau the lodges were generously endowed with arable, in the steppe with wells, and in the oases with date-palms and springs. Later, further gifts of arable, wells, springs, and date-palms, or part use of these, would sometimes be made, especially when there was a dispute between two sections about ownership of property and neither would give way to the other,